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SENATE MEMORIAL 52

**48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2008**

INTRODUCED BY

Bernadette M. Sanchez

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND THE OFFICE OF  
EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND  
ADMINISTRATION TO CONDUCT AN EVALUATION OF THE ALBUQUERQUE  
PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT.

WHEREAS, with approximately eighty-eight thousand  
students, the Albuquerque public school district is the largest  
school district in the state and one of the largest school  
districts in the country; and

WHEREAS, the student population of the Albuquerque public  
school district includes a majority who are Hispanic students,  
approximately thirty percent who are non-Hispanic Caucasian  
students, almost four percent who are African American students  
and an approximately two and one-half percent who are Asian  
students; and

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1           WHEREAS, the school district encompasses the south valley,  
2 southeast heights, far northeast heights and the west mesa  
3 areas of the Albuquerque metropolis; and

4           WHEREAS, the Albuquerque public school district includes  
5 the entire range of the socioeconomic scale, with sixty-one  
6 percent of its elementary and middle school students receiving  
7 free or reduced-fee lunch; and

8           WHEREAS, the state equalization guarantee includes a cost  
9 differential that provides school districts with additional  
10 funds based upon certain characteristics that describe students  
11 at risk of dropping out, including mobility, family income,  
12 English-language learner status and the percent of students who  
13 receive Title 1 funding; and

14           WHEREAS, because those characteristics are accurate  
15 predictors of the number of students who are at risk of not  
16 completing high school, it is important that state funding for  
17 at-risk students be spent in the schools and classrooms that  
18 generate the funds; and

19           WHEREAS, the schools in the West Mesa school cluster have  
20 many students who come from disadvantaged socioeconomic  
21 backgrounds; and

22           WHEREAS, anecdotal information indicates that those  
23 schools are no longer receiving the financial aid they once  
24 received to serve their large numbers of at-risk students; and

25           WHEREAS, as a result of decreases in financial aid to the

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1 West Mesa cluster schools, these schools are hampered in their  
2 ability to provide the intensive services through Title 1,  
3 direct services and other educational programs that at-risk  
4 students need if they are going to remain in school and  
5 graduate;

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE  
7 OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative finance committee and the  
8 office of education accountability of the department of finance  
9 and administration be requested to conduct an evaluation of the  
10 West Mesa cluster schools of the Albuquerque public school  
11 district to determine how, for what purposes and to what  
12 schools state and federal funds are allocated; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative finance  
14 committee and the office of education accountability also  
15 determine whether the Albuquerque public school district is  
16 putting its at-risk funding into schools identified as having  
17 the highest dropout rates and other indicators of large at-risk  
18 student populations; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the evaluation team conducting  
20 the study report its findings and recommendations to the  
21 legislative finance committee, the legislative education study  
22 committee and the public education department by November 1,  
23 2008; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
25 transmitted to the director of the legislative finance

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1 committee, the director of the office of education  
2 accountability of the department of finance and administration  
3 and the secretary of public education.

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